GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2357
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2000
KILLING OF OWLS
TUFANI SAROJ

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether rare species of owls are on the verge of extinction;

(b) if so the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a large number of owls have been killed by Tantriks during Dussehra and Deepawali period; and

(d) if so, the steps propose to be taken by the Government for protecting the species of owls ?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a)&(b) Surveys have revealed that the Forest Spotted Owlets (Blewitti owlet) have become critically endangered. The reasons attributed to its decline are mainly fragmentation and destruction of its habitat.

(c) Isolated incidences of such nature cannot be ruled out.

(d) The steps taken by the Government for protection of this species include:

i. Forest Spotted Owlet has been included in the Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby providing it the highest degree of protection. Hunting of this species has been prohibited.

(ii) A network of 566 wildlife protected areas covering 4.6% of country`s geographical area has been created for conservation of wild flora and fauna which has helped in protecting the habitat of Owlets.

(iii) Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for development and management of the protected areas.Raids are carried out by wildlife authorities to curb poaching and illegal trade of wild animals.

(iv) International trade in wildlife and its products has regulated under the provisions of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species). Export of all forms of wild animals including their parts and products is prohibited under the EXIM policy.

(v) Regional and Sub- regional offices of Wildlife Preservation have been set up at the main export centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wildlife products.